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Security Council
Fifty-third Year

Provisional

3855th Meeting
Friday, 20 February 1998, 3 p.m.
New York

President:	Mr. Dangue Réwaka	(Gabon)
Members:	Bahrain	Mr. Buallay
	Brazil	Mr. Amorim
	China	Mr. Qin Huasun
	Costa Rica	Mr. Berrocal Soto
	France	Mr. Dejammet
	Gambia	Mr. Sallah
	Japan	Mr. Owada
	Kenya	Mr. Mahugu
	Portugal	Mr. Monteiro
	Russian Federation	Mr. Lavrov
	Slovenia	Mr. Türk
	Sweden	Mr. Dahlgren
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Sir John Weston
	United States of America	Mr. Burleigh

Agenda

The situation between Iraq and Kuwait

Report of the Secretary-General pursuant to paragraph 7 of resolution 1143 (1997) (S/1998/90)

Letter dated 30 January 1998 from the Chairman of the Security Council Committee established by resolution 661 (1990) concerning the situation between Iraq and Kuwait addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/1998/92)

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The meeting was called to order at 3.15 p.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation between Iraq and Kuwait

Report of the Secretary-General pursuant to paragraph 7 of resolution 1143 (1997) (S/1998/90)

Letter dated 30 January 1998 from the Chairman of the Security Council Committee established by resolution 661 (1990) concerning the situation between Iraq and Kuwait addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/1998/92)

The President (*interpretation from French*): The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations.

Members of the Council have before them the report of the Secretary-General pursuant to paragraph 7 of resolution 1143 (1997), document S/1998/90, and the letter dated 30 January 1998 from the Chairman of the Security Council Committee established by resolution 661 (1990) concerning the situation between Iraq and Kuwait addressed to the President of the Security Council, document S/1998/92.

Members of the Council also have before them document S/1998/136, which contains the text of a draft resolution prepared in the course of the Council's prior consultations.

I should like to draw the attention of members of the Council to document S/1998/125, which contains the text of a letter dated 15 February 1998 from the Permanent Representative of Iraq to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General, transmitting the text of a letter of the same date from the Deputy Prime Minister and Acting Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Iraq addressed to the Secretary-General.

It is my understanding that the Council is ready to vote on the draft resolution before it. Unless I hear any objection, I shall put the draft resolution to the vote.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

I shall first call on those members of the Council who wish to make statements before the voting.

Mr. Owada (Japan): Today, the Security Council is adopting a draft resolution which will increase the resources for the oil-for-food humanitarian programme envisaged under its resolution 986 (1995) of 14 April 1995. Resolution 986 (1995) was conceived as a temporary measure to provide for the humanitarian needs of the Iraqi people until the fulfilment by the Government of Iraq of the relevant Council resolutions, including, notably, resolution 687 (1991) of 3 April 1991. Unfortunately, the non-compliance by Iraq with its obligations has so far made impossible the lifting of sanctions. It should be noted that under these circumstances such a temporary measure has been necessary up until today.

We in the Security Council have all supported the oil-for-food programme under resolution 986 (1995) in order to meet the need to avoid the deterioration of the humanitarian situation of the Iraqi people brought about under the circumstances. In this context, we note with concern the report of the Secretary-General of 1 February 1998, which states, in relation to the current sum available for humanitarian purposes, that

> "it has become increasingly apparent that this sum is inadequate to prevent further deterioration in humanitarian conditions and cannot effect the improvement in the health and nutritional status of the Iraqi population the Council hoped for when it unanimously adopted the measure." (S/1998/90, para. 66)

The Secretary-General recommends that

> "expanded assistance is urgently required to address the humanitarian situation in Iraq" [ibid].

Japan concurs with the provision of additional resources in accordance with his report.

In the view of the delegation of Japan, in order to achieve the objective of resolution 986 (1995), it is important to facilitate the effective and practical implementation of the oil-for-food programme, so that the Iraqi people may benefit fully from the available resources. From this standpoint, Japan supports the Secretary-General's proposals to deal with the humanitarian needs in a targeted manner and to further expedite the implementation process. It is the expectation

of Japan that the concrete arrangements contained in the provisions of this draft resolution, notably in paragraph 2, will prove to be adequate to meet our common objective in the Council of avoiding a further deterioration of the current humanitarian situation.

At the same time, I wish to emphasize that for the effective and efficient implementation of this oil-for-food programme, it is essential that the United Nations observation process be handled in such a way as to provide the required assurance to the Council of the equitable distribution of the goods produced in accordance with this draft resolution and that all supplies authorized for procurement are utilized for the purpose for which they have been authorized.

It is earnestly hoped that all parties, particularly the Government of Iraq, will provide their full cooperation for the effective implementation of this programme. As a member of the Committee established pursuant to resolution 661 (1990), Japan will continue to participate actively in the efforts to further promote the implementation of the programme. It is also important in this context that the Committee ensures that the measures with respect to refining and clarifying its working procedures, as referred to in its report of 30 January 1998, are implemented and that the relevant observations and recommendations referred to in the Secretary-General's report of 1 February 1998 are considered, in particular with a view to reducing the delay between the export of petroleum and petroleum products from Iraq and the supply of goods to Iraq in accordance with this draft resolution.

On 18 February, the Security Council heard from the Secretary-General, Mr. Kofi Annan, about his intention to visit Baghdad and unanimously expressed its full support for his mission. As a member of the Council, Japan earnestly hopes that his visit, which is the determining step for a peaceful solution to the present crisis, will be successful in bringing about Iraq's full and unrestricted cooperation with the United Nations Special Commission (UNSCOM) in accordance with all relevant resolutions. It is the sincere desire of Japan that the day will come as soon as possible when the sanctions currently applied to Iraq will be lifted through Iraq's full compliance with its obligations under the relevant resolutions.

The adoption of this draft resolution at this precise juncture, when the Secretary-General is meeting with the leadership of the Government of Iraq, is particularly significant in this context as an important signal from the Council and from the international community to the Iraqi people.

For these reasons, my delegation will vote in favour of this draft resolution.

Mr. Dejammet (France) (*interpretation from French*): The text that we shall be adopting today represents an important step in the right direction. Before the Secretary-General's important visit to Baghdad it was essential for us to be able to express our support for his report and his recommendations for improving the arrangements provided for in resolution 986 (1995).

Four basic principles emerge from this draft resolution. The oil quota has been raised to the highest level of Iraqi pre-war production. Iraq, therefore, will be able to export its main resource without restrictions.

The utilization of funds has been rebalanced to the advantage of infrastructure. This was the desire expressed by United Nations agencies and humanitarian organizations in the field. After seven years of embargo, the humanitarian situation in Iraq can no longer be treated like a natural disaster: sending medicine and food is not enough. Iraq must be able to have a minimum of agricultural production; the population must have drinking water; and children must be able to go to school.

The important role of the electricity sector is being recognized. Without electricity there are no hospitals worthy of the name; vaccines cannot be preserved; and healthy living conditions cannot be maintained. We await with great interest the report of the Secretary-General on this sector and on the means of financing that he may propose to us.

The last principle is that consideration of the means necessary for Iraq to achieve its oil quota has begun. A report from a group of experts is being requested promptly. The Council expresses its readiness to implement their recommendations and to authorize the sanctions Committee to approve the contracts pertaining to the spare parts needed to maintain oil pipelines and oil wells.

This text is only one stage. Its implementation will require the conclusion of arrangements between the Secretary-General and the Iraqi Government. Those arrangements must be in keeping with the spirit of the memorandum of understanding reached between Iraq and

the Secretary-General in 1996. The sovereignty of Iraq must be preserved, and the temporary nature of the distribution plan should be underlined. The discussions between the Iraqis and the Secretary-General will provide an opportunity to spell out several of these recommendations more clearly, to test their feasibility. They will enable us to review priorities. It will then be for the Iraqis to present a distribution plan before this draft resolution can enter into force.

This draft resolution is only one stage. Others must follow. The Council has not taken a decision on the means to be granted to Iraq to achieve its quota. It has stated its position only on the principle and on the basis of a report.

We would have wished the text to go farther at this point. This was not possible. We shall therefore have to get back to work. Everyone knows that, in the view of international experts and of the principal country concerned, Iraq, that country cannot have exports worth more than $4 billion every six months. Thus, as soon as the report is submitted, the Council must enable Iraq to achieve its quota. Otherwise, today's exercise will have been in vain and in retrospect will appear more political and less realistic.

The Council will soon have to take a position on the Secretary-General's report on the electricity sector, which, according to the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations and the United Nations Development Programme, plays a key role in stabilizing the situation. If external financing from international donors cannot be found, it will then be necessary to reintroduce the electricity sector, which is modestly addressed in the provisions to be adopted today, into the distribution plan.

I believe it is necessary to bear in mind how catastrophic the humanitarian situation is in Iraq. I would recall that, according to information provided by the World Health Organization and UNICEF, infant mortality rose from 24 per thousand in 1990 to 168 per thousand in 1996. That is a sevenfold increase. Monthly deaths of children under the age of five tripled, from 1,500 to 4,500, in 1996. The mortality rate has tripled since 1990 among people over the age of 50. I shall stop there.

The decision we are to take today is therefore important; however, only the lifting of the embargo, which in turn depends upon the full implementation of paragraph 22 of Security Council resolution 687 (1991) will truly make it possible to resolve the present humanitarian situation. Iraq's cooperation with the Special Commission and, in the immediate term, the success of the Secretary-General's mission in this regard are essential.

Mr. Amorim (Brazil): The oil-for-food mechanism established by resolution 986 (1995), and to be expanded in accordance with the recommendations of the Secretary-General through the draft resolution presented to the Security Council today, is a central piece of the work of the United Nations in Iraq.

The imposition of comprehensive sanctions on Iraq's external trade should have been a short-term measure The expectation of the international community was that Iraq would comply promptly with all the requirements of resolution 687 (1991) and previous Security Council resolutions, and that the trade restrictions would be lifted.

Unfortunately, this has not been the case. Seven years later, we still face the problem of ensuring full Iraqi compliance. It has become imperative to devise suitable ways for satisfying the essential needs of Iraq's civilian population, which was never intended to be subjected to any form of collective punishment.

For this reason, Brazil has been supportive of the oil-for-food mechanism. We endorsed the recommendation for its expansion presented by Secretary-General Kofi Annan on 1 February.

We share his conclusion, based on the extensive experience of the Office of the Iraq Programme and United Nations agencies in the field, that it is essential to channel resources to the recovery of essential infrastructure sectors in Iraq, including water and sanitation, education, transportation and electricity. Without urgent repair, the deterioration of Iraqi infrastructure would substantially reduce the positive impact of the supplies of food and medicine.

Therefore, we joined other delegations in the efforts to prepare a technical resolution that, in accordance with the recommendations of the Secretary-General, would allow for the rapid increase of the volume of oil authorized for export, with a view to using the additional resources for addressing the basic needs of the Iraqi people.

We strove for a resolution that would be credible and practical. The Security Council's aim is not just to send a message to the Iraqi people; rather, our objective is to provide the essential supplies that the Secretary-

General considers indispensable to prevent a further deterioration of the very serious humanitarian situation in Iraq.

The text before us, even if it is not perfect, addresses our basic requirements. The Secretariat will have to work intensively with Iraq in order to overcome the remaining technical difficulties. Such work should take place in a spirit of flexibility and fairness, in accordance with the Memorandum of Understanding signed between the United Nations and Iraq.

We expect the Government of Iraq to present, as soon as possible, a distribution plan which includes a description of the goods to be purchased and which effectively guarantees their equitable distribution. We call upon the Government of Iraq to engage fully in the technical discussions with the Secretariat in order to fulfil the requirements for the entry into force of the expanded mechanism.

Iraq should be assured of the temporary nature of the mechanism. Once full compliance by Iraq with the pertinent resolutions is assured, the Security Council will act in accordance with its own resolutions, and the process of lifting the sanctions can be started.

The Security Council and its sanctions Committee should also be ready to work together with the Secretary-General in the months to come, in which a number of reports with specific recommendations on the oil-for-food mechanism are to be expected, according to the draft resolution we will be adopting today.

Finally, it is impossible not to mention the fact that the outcome of the Secretary-General's current mission of good offices to Baghdad is directly linked to the evolution of the humanitarian situation in Iraq. By adopting this draft resolution and approving the recommendations of the Secretary-General, the Security Council will also be giving a signal of its full and unanimous support for his mission, in the firm hope that a peaceful solution can still be found for the current crisis.

We still believe that a combination of firmness in substance and flexibility in form can provide the diplomatic solution we all agree is the best outcome. In the critical decisions of the next few days, the Security Council will again rely on the good judgement and advice of the Secretary-General.

Mr. Lavrov (Russian Federation) (*interpretation from Russian*): Russia is deeply concerned over the scope and serious consequences of the continuing humanitarian crisis in Iraq. From the Secretary-General's report submitted to the Security Council, we see clearly that during the course of the implementation of the three stages of humanitarian resolution 986 (1995) we were not able to achieve a breakthrough in the situation and fundamentally improve the impoverished situation of the Iraqi population.

Therefore, the Secretary-General quite rightly proposes a comprehensive approach to the resolution of the problem of food supplies and health care, providing for parallel measures in the areas of energy supply, water supply and agriculture, without which the real value of humanitarian supplies would be significantly diminished and in some cases would be reduced to nothing.

Today we will be adopting a draft resolution to increase revenues in order to satisfy Iraq's priority humanitarian requirements through an increase in the level of oil exports for this purpose to $5.256 billion. But there is much more to this task. The United Nations Secretariat must in the shortest possible time-frame work out with the Iraqi side a distribution plan for optimum use of the additional funds.

The Iraqi oil infrastructure, in its current state, is hardly able to extract oil for export at the required levels for humanitarian purposes. Repairs are needed for worn-out equipment, which can be accomplished through supplying the relevant spare parts and materials. Needless to say, the financing of such a project requires additional quotas for oil exports, which must be agreed upon by the Secretariat and the Iraqi side. We expect the urgent preparation of additional recommendations by the Secretary-General on the restoration of the oil infrastructure, as provided for in the draft resolution.

On the whole, the draft resolution meets the aim of relieving the suffering of the Iraqi population, and we support the consensus that has come about in the Council. During the course of the work on the draft resolution, the sponsors took into account many of the concerns of a number of delegations, including our own. However, some of the provisions could have been further improved. So, in our view, there is no need to emphasize the priority nature of various sectors; the optimum interrelationships of various categories of humanitarian products should be defined in the course of agreeing upon and approving the distribution plan submitted by Iraq.

We also proceed from the understanding that the establishment of a distribution plan in the draft resolution does not mean that that plan cannot be changed. At each new stage this plan must be fully thrashed out with Iraq and submitted to the Secretary-General of the United Nations for approval, as is emphasized in the preamble of the resolution. There are other aspects, which evidently will have to be ironed out in the process of the implementation of the resolution within the framework of the Sanctions Committee. All members of that Committee must recognize their responsibility for achieving radical changes in the humanitarian situation in Iraq.

In conclusion we would like to pay due tribute to the United Nations humanitarian programme staff in Iraq, who, under challenging circumstances, are performing an important and noble task. We noted with satisfaction the clarification provided by the Secretariat that all the necessary staff will remain in Iraq and continue to carry out the humanitarian programmes.

Mr. Monteiro (Portugal): Barely one month and a half has elapsed since we adopted resolution 1143 (1997), in which the Council unanimously welcomed the intention of the Secretary-General to submit a supplementary report to find ways of improving the implementation of the humanitarian programme in Iraq. The Council expressed its willingness to consider an increase of the Iraqi resources funding the oil-for-food programme as needed to meet the priority humanitarian requirements of the Iraqi people. By the same resolution the 661 Committee was asked to present a report on the refining and clarifying of its working procedures.

During this period major efforts were undertaken by the Secretary-General, the Secretariat, members of the Council and the 661 Committee to review all aspects of the humanitarian programme. Many complex technical aspects were involved. The common objective was not only to provide for the continuation of the programme, but also to ensure its renovation by giving it a different and substantially increased humanitarian dimension.

The draft resolution before us embodies the appropriate reaction of the Council to all these efforts, in particular to the innovative proposals contained in the comprehensive report submitted by the Secretary-General earlier this month, which we welcomed and which deserves our highest appreciation.

As President of the Iraq sanctions committee, I have an acute sense of the serious humanitarian needs at stake and the obvious urgency of meeting them. This prompted my delegation to initiate immediately, upon the presentation of the reports, consultations with all Council members with a view to achieving agreement on a resolution giving the Council's full endorsement to the Secretary-General's recommendations.

These consultations clearly demonstrated the full commitment of all delegations to the humanitarian interests involved and the success of their cooperation in those endeavours. Many technical complexities had to be addressed. Others may still arise, or some elements may still need to be clarified. But we are confident that all the relevant questions are included in the text of this draft resolution. It provides a clear political endorsement of the actions envisaged in the new extended programme and, at the same time, allows for the necessary flexibility in its implementation, including adjustments that may be recommended by further studies to be made with the cooperation of the Iraqi authorities.

The goals that we have to achieve with this draft resolution can be attained only with the cooperation of the Iraqi authorities. We praise the Secretary-General for having repeatedly sought that cooperation in his overall review of the humanitarian programme and the preparation of his report. Unfortunately, certain questions remain unanswered. We join the Secretary-General in his appeals to the Iraqi authorities to cooperate fully in the implementation of this programme. With its unprecedented scope it can definitely provide substantial relief to the needs of the Iraqi people, not just through a considerable increase in the required food and health supplies, but also by providing for the rehabilitation of basic infrastructures in Iraq.

The unanimity of this Council around this draft resolution and the extended humanitarian programme it encompasses shows the resolve of the Council to improve the humanitarian situation of the Iraqi people. But it also conveys a clear positive signal at this very significant moment when the Secretary-General is in Baghdad. We fully back him and wish him complete success.

Mr. Mahugu (Kenya): The Kenya delegation is pleased with the speed with which the Council has been able to react to the Secretary-General's recommendations contained in his report S/1998/90 of 1 February 1998, which, *inter alia*, calls for the expansion and improvement of the implementation of the humanitarian programme for Iraq under Security Council resolution 986 (1995) of 14 April 1995: the oil-for-food

programme. The fact that the Council has responded quickly against the backdrop of rising tensions precipitated by the current crisis is an indication of its commitment and readiness to continue to provide for the humanitarian needs of the Iraqi people.

As we have stated in the past, the oil-for-food programme, which was conceived as an exemption to the existing sanctions regime, is intended to minimize the adverse effects suffered by the innocent civilian population as a result of the embargo on the Government of Iraq. But neither these arrangements nor the punitive impact they were intended to have gives us any measure of comfort. Consequently, we attach a great deal of importance to the onerous mission of the Secretary-General to Baghdad this weekend. The suffering of the people of Iraq should be brought to an end once the conditions imposed by the Security Council have been met by the Iraqi authorities. The mission should not only avert any possible military confrontation but also produce results that will soon provide the first glare of light at the end of the tunnel.

The current stand-off, which we hope will be brought to an end peacefully, should not be allowed to delay the implementation of the Secretary-General's proposals. We have thus favoured a draft resolution that is technical in content and completely de-linked in substance from other political considerations. We wish, in this regard, to express our thanks to the drafters of the draft resolution for coming up with the initial text and for coordinating subsequent consultations, which have resulted in this consensus text before us today.

The objectives underlying this draft resolution can be realized only with the cooperation of the Iraqi authorities. In particular, we hope that the long delays experienced after the Council adopted resolution 986 (1995) and before its effective implementation will not be repeated. This is even more important since the programme review described in the report of the Secretary-General did not benefit from the input of the Iraqi Government. The report notes,

> "Should the Council approve additional funding, all the recommendations regarding additional inputs would require detailed discussions with the Government of Iraq and local authority counterparts in order to clarify outstanding issues and to establish a clear agreement on priorities." (*S/1998/90, para. 6*)

We therefore urge the Secretary-General to meet with the Iraq side as soon as possible and work out the details within the framework of the existing memorandum of understanding in order to clear up any misunderstandings.

As the Secretary-General has repeatedly observed in his reports to the Council on the oil-for-food programme, this exceptionally unique and unprecedented programme presents complex difficulties of implementation, with all its attendant political, psychological and commercial dimensions. Indeed, there is interlinkage between the processes involved in the delivery and distribution of supplies and the infrastructure necessary to support the related activities. For example, seeds, fertilizer or weed killers purchased under the humanitarian programme will be rendered useless if the necessary implements, storage, transportation or handling systems are not functioning due to breakage.

The Secretary-General has addressed this matter in his report. We agree with his conclusion that the deterioration of basic infrastructure in sectors other than food and health is undermining the value of our humanitarian input. We therefore believe that means have to be provided to Iraq not only to improve the infrastructure necessary for the implementation of the expanded humanitarian programme, but also to enhance the capacity to pump sufficient oil to meet the increased levels. It is our hope, therefore, that the Secretary-General will act on paragraphs 11 and 12 and submit his findings to the Council without delay.

It is for all these reasons that Kenya will vote in favour of the draft resolution.

Mr. Dahlgren (Sweden): This afternoon, the Secretary-General is arriving in Baghdad on a crucial mission to try to defuse a crisis that has been the focus of worldwide attention for weeks. Not only are the good offices of the Secretary-General being utilized in their most direct form, but he has also embarked on his trip with the full and unanimous backing of the Security Council and United Nations Member States. I would like to take this opportunity, on behalf of my Government, to restate our firm wishes for his success in seeking a peaceful, diplomatic solution to the current crisis.

A couple of weeks ago, we received the supplementary report of the Secretary-General on the humanitarian situation in Iraq. It is worrying reading. In almost all sectors — food/nutrition, health, electricity and others — the situation is described as grave and deteriorating. It has been clear to us all that something had to be done urgently to address the alarming

humanitarian situation and to alleviate the plight of the Iraqi population. A significant expansion of the so-called oil-for-food programme could meet that end.

That is why, together with the United Kingdom and Portugal, Sweden engaged in an effort to try to put the recommendations contained in the report of the Secretary-General into a Security Council resolution. Our aim was to find common ground that would enable this Council to give unanimous support to an expansion of the humanitarian programme in Iraq.

A comprehensive approach is the proper response to the needs of the people of Iraq. Through the adoption of this draft resolution, crucial resources will be made available for medicine and food, as well as for other sectors such as water, sanitation, agriculture and electricity. The expanded programme will support vulnerable groups, in particular children, and the effectiveness and flexibility of the programme will be further enhanced when the distribution plan envisaged for the implementation of the draft resolution is approved.

By adopting the draft resolution before us, the Security Council will demonstrate its determination to help alleviate the humanitarian crisis in Iraq. But the oil-for-food programme alone cannot satisfy all the humanitarian needs of the Iraqi people and was never intended to do so. We should keep in mind that the oil-for-food programme is a temporary arrangement. It will no longer be necessary once Iraq fulfils the requirements of all relevant Security Council resolutions and the sanctions are subsequently lifted. Meanwhile, the Government of Iraq continues to have a responsibility for the needs of its population, of course, and must also cooperate fully with the United Nations in the implementation of this complex and unprecedented humanitarian programme. At the same time, the United Nations, on its part, must continuously make sure that the process is running as smoothly as possible.

We believe that a unanimous vote in favour of this draft resolution would send a clear and important signal to the Iraqi Government at this point. We are also convinced that such a demonstration of unity would be conducive to the talks in which the Secretary-General will soon be engaged in Baghdad.

Mr. Qin Huasun (China) (*interpretation from Chinese*): Iraq has been under sanctions for more than seven years and the humanitarian there has continued to deteriorate. The Chinese delegation expresses its deep sympathy with the people of Iraq for their sufferings.

The draft resolution before us would approve an increase in the amount of oil to be exported by Iraq and would thereby increase the amount of humanitarian supplies it can import. We believe that this would help to alleviate the current humanitarian situation in Iraq. The Chinese delegation will therefore vote in favour of the draft resolution before us.

The oil-for-food programme should proceed on the basis of full respect for the sovereignty of Iraq and be implemented strictly in accordance with the memorandum of understanding between the United Nations Secretariat and the Government of Iraq. We hope that, once the draft resolution is adopted, the parties concerned will actively collaborate in its implementation. We hope that there will be no linkage in the implementation process itself between this humanitarian question and political issues.

We urge the parties concerned to expedite the review and approval procedure and to avoid artificial delays in order to ensure that the oil-export earnings are converted into humanitarian supplies as soon as possible. In the meantime, I wish to emphasize that the current plan is merely a temporary measure for easing the humanitarian situation in Iraq. A definitive solution to the humanitarian crisis in Iraq lies solely in the gradual removal of the sanctions against that country.

The Security Council is considering a draft resolution on the humanitarian programme for Iraq on the very day when the Secretary-General is arriving there for diplomatic mediation. We sincerely hope that he will achieve success in his visit.

Mr. Türk (Slovenia): Slovenia fully supports the draft resolution on the review of Security Council resolution 986 (1995) on the humanitarian programme for Iraq. We commend the delegations that worked to prepare the draft resolution and to make it possible for the Council to adopt it.

Perhaps this is an occasion at which a thought of a general character might be in order. Sanctions are generally a blunt instrument that has many unintended consequences. Imposing and implementing sanctions against a country unfortunately carries with it disproportionate suffering for innocent people. In this context, let me refer to a recent document, General Comment No. 8 adopted in December 1997 by the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights — an expert body of the United Nations. In that document, the Committee stated that sanctions

> "often cause significant disruption in the distribution of food, pharmaceuticals and sanitation supplies, jeopardize the quality of food and the availability of clean drinking water, severely interfere with the functioning of basic health and education systems, and undermine the right to work." (E/C.12/1997/8, para. 3)

In short, sanctions, according to the opinion of that expert Committee, almost always have a dramatic impact on the rights recognized in the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights.

In such situations the international community, and of course the Security Council in particular, have a great obligation to take steps to reduce disproportionate suffering, especially suffering affecting the most vulnerable groups. We share the view that decisions to reduce the suffering of those groups can be taken without jeopardizing the policy aim of sanctions themselves.

The Government concerned may not always be sensitive to these problems, but the Security Council must, and it must also demonstrate its ability to find solutions.

These are some of the main reasons for which we fully support the efforts of the Secretary-General and of the Security Council to improve the implementation of the humanitarian programme for Iraq and to take such actions over additional resources as needed to meet the priority humanitarian requirements of the Iraqi people. We believe that our common efforts fulfil the task of alleviating the critical humanitarian situation in Iraq. We believe that the draft resolution to be adopted today is comprehensive and covers all of the aspects of the humanitarian crisis to which the Secretary-General drew attention in his report of 1 February 1998. It approves a necessary substantive increase in the export of oil from Iraq; it provides for an increase in and an improvement in the quality of the food/nutrition basket; it provides for additional and necessary medical supplies; and last but not least, it expresses the Council's readiness to approve the necessary infrastructural refurbishment.

In conclusion, we would like to express our regret and concern that the Government of Iraq did not cooperate fully with the Secretary-General in the preparation of his report. We therefore urge the Iraqi Government to extend its full cooperation in the effective implementation of the present draft resolution.

Mr. Buallay (Bahrain) (*interpretation from Arabic*): The Security Council adopted many resolutions to confront the Iraqi occupation of the State of Kuwait in 1990, including the imposition of a comprehensive embargo on Iraq, because it violated the principles of international legitimacy. Asking Iraq to comply fully with the implementation of the relevant Security Council resolutions is nothing more than the consequence of my country's desire to have the imposed embargo lifted thereafter. This is the embargo whose negative effects have been borne by the Iraqi people.

The information emanating from various United Nations specialized agencies, particularly from the United Nations Children's Fund, the Food and Agriculture Organization and the World Health Organization reveal the deteriorating health and nutritional conditions of Iraqi people from all sectors of the population, including the elderly, women and children. The mortality rate has reached frightening proportions. Subsequently, the Security Council adopted resolution 986 (1995) as a contribution towards addressing the deteriorating situation by allowing Iraq to export a quantity of its oil, valued at $2 billion, every six months. That sum is earmarked to meet the increasing needs of the Iraqi people for food and medicine, which is known as the oil-for-food programme.

With the continuation of sanctions and since the adoption of the resolution mentioned earlier, whereby the international community is asking Iraq to implement the relevant Security Council resolutions, resolution 986 (1995) has proved itself unable to deal sufficiently with the deteriorating situation of the Iraqi people because the amount provided by that resolution is not sufficient. In addition, the resolution faced difficulties in its implementation. Hence, the Security Council has discussed the deteriorating situation with concern, and, as a result, it adopted resolutions 1111 (1997) and 1129 (1997). Furthermore, the Security Council has asked the Secretary-General, in accordance with its resolution 1143 (1997), to study that deteriorating situation and to submit a report in that regard, including his recommendations to address the situation. The report of the Secretary-General (S/1998/90) explained in detail the unsettling living conditions affecting the health and living standards under which the Iraqi people have suffered as a result of the continued sanctions. The Secretary-General's recommendations were positive with respect to their contribution towards meeting that situation in connection with doubling the value of the medicine and food protein basket. They also included bolstering the health and medical treatment assistance and the repair of the

infrastructure, education, agriculture, and so on. The report also stressed the need to ensure that this assistance reaches the Iraqi people.

Conscious of the depth of its responsibility towards addressing the negative social situation in Iraq, the members of the Council have worked seriously and strenuously for 20 days to produce an integrated draft resolution, which is before us today for adoption. The crystallization of this draft was accompanied by an exchange of viewpoints reflecting some divergence. This is natural in view of the multiplicity of elements of the oil-for-food programme and the concomitant complexity of the means of its implementation. However, we have at last at the end of our endeavours reached a positive result.

The State of Bahrain finds that the present draft resolution is to be regarded a necessary measure with respect to its taking into consideration the recommendations of the Secretary-General concerning the increase in the amounts allocated to food and medicine. However, we have a few observations as follows:

First, the draft resolution should be implemented with the full cooperation of the Iraqi authorities. Secondly, the measures proposed in its operative paragraphs are not characterized by flexibility and by distancing from bureaucracy. These are the two conditions which must obtain in order to ensure quick and streamlined implementation, so that the humanitarian assistance can reach the Iraqi people in a timely manner. We understand the Security Council's cautious approach which aims at ensuring that the assistance reaches its real destination. But too much control would definitely lead to a degree of delay in the delivery of that assistance to the Iraqi people, which is embodied in the resolution before us today.

Thirdly, my delegation supports all the recommendations contained in the Secretary-General's report on which today's draft resolution is based, including his recommendations concerning permission of the export of the necessary equipment to Iraq in order to enable it to export its oil. Therefore, the group proposed to be formed for this purpose, mentioned in operative paragraph 12 of the draft resolution, should finish its job within the time specified as necessary for the exportation of the Iraqi oil, in accordance with this draft resolution.

Fourthly, my country, once again, reaffirms before the Council that the present draft resolution is not in any way linked to resolution 687 (1991), related to the destruction of weapons of mass destruction. Thus we are focusing on the purely humanitarian nature of today's draft resolution, which concentrates on addressing the deteriorating conditions of the Iraqi people. Fifthly, my delegation affirms the need to respect the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Iraq. This is stressed in the eighth preambular paragraph of the draft resolution that is before us today.

Finally, the State of Bahrain considers the present resolution as the climax of positive and important responsiveness by the Security Council resulting from the Council's efforts in support of humanitarian assistance directed to the Iraqi people. My delegation also finds that this draft resolution is very well timed as it coincides with the peaceful mission of the Secretary-General, which he, at present, is undertaking in Baghdad in pursuit of his good offices to deal with the current crisis between Iraq and the United Nations Special Commission.

The adoption of this draft resolution could be an incentive to give more weight to the peaceful solution of the crisis with a view to the protection of the Security Council's credibility and position, and the enabling of Iraq, the region and the world to avoid the scourge of non-pacific options in view of their devastating consequences. We therefore will support the draft resolution and vote in its favour.

Mr. Berrocal Soto (Costa Rica) (*interpretation from Spanish*): Costa Rica attaches the greatest importance to the holding of this formal meeting, in which the Security Council will express its position regarding the humanitarian situation in Iraq, in the context of resolutions 986 (1995), 1111 (1997), 1129 (1997) and 1143 (1997) and in the light of the important report submitted by the Secretary-General on 1 February.

From our point of view, the fact that the Security Council is meeting today to address this matter takes on special relevance in view of the current grave situation and the vital peace mission that Secretary-General Kofi Annan is conducting in Baghdad with the full support of the Security Council and in keeping with the powers and obligations established for the Secretariat in the United Nations Charter.

Costa Rica believes that, in the present circumstances, the fact that the Security Council is debating and is to adopt a draft resolution concerning the difficult humanitarian situation suffered by the Iraqi people is a clear demonstration of its political sensitivity and its willingness to assume a broad and constructive

role in solidarity with the inhabitants of that country, who are in no way responsible for the actions, omissions or decisions of their rulers.

The draft resolution before us is an important contribution by the Security Council to avoid a further worsening of the difficult humanitarian situation of the people of Iraq. The fact that we agree on the increase in the amount of exports of Iraqi petroleum and petroleum products should lead to a substantial increase in the amount of tangible humanitarian resources available to attend to the urgent needs of the inhabitants of that country. This is a significant improvement over the situation at the end of 1997, and my country expresses its satisfaction with the unanimity of the Security Council.

This will of course require enhanced capacity, efficiency and management on the part of the United Nations so that it can appropriately and without undue delay attend to matters such as the approval of contracts and the follow-up on the ground to verify and ensure that the goods obtained are distributed, and distributed equitably to all of the Iraqi population. My country is fully aware of the responsibility and enormous magnitude of this humanitarian programme and what it means to the United Nations.

We of course understand that the draft we have before us is far from perfect. My delegation would have preferred greater flexibility and scope in some of its provisions with a view to guaranteeing its humanitarian character. However, we understand the present complicated political conditions under which it has been negotiated, and we therefore express our appreciation to the sponsors for their great effort to harmonize positions. The final point to emphasize is that this decision of the Security Council expresses clearly the unanimous desire of the 15 members to make a positive contribution, from a humanitarian point of view, to resolving the current crisis in Iraq.

On the basis of what I have just stated, Costa Rica reiterates the position of principle that it has maintained since last year and expresses its full support for the draft resolution before us. At the same time, my delegation is extremely pleased that this decision is to be taken precisely on the day of the Secretary-General's arrival in Baghdad to negotiate a peaceful diplomatic solution to the crisis with Iraq.

Mr. Burleigh (United States of America): The United States is proud to cast its vote today in favour of this draft resolution to expand the 986 humanitarian programme in Iraq. It is, quite simply, the largest United-Nations-sanctioned humanitarian programme in the history of the Organization. As such, it is a concrete demonstration that the United Nations, and in particular the members of this Council, remains committed to meeting the essential humanitarian needs of all of Iraq's people.

Let me make our position very clear. The United States is deeply concerned about the welfare of the Iraqi people and we want to do everything we can to make sure their basic needs are met. For that reason, we welcomed the Secretary-General's recommendations. We strongly supported expansion of the 986 programme to make it more effective and more efficient. We favoured an increase in the dollar amount of oil sales permitted under the programme in order to finance the importation of additional humanitarian goods. We believe that expanding the scope of the programme is desirable and in fact essential to its humanitarian goals.

Our position and that of all the other members of the Council stands in stark contrast to the policies of Iraq's leadership. While Iraqi children have gone hungry, Saddam Hussein has diverted scarce resources to build more palaces and weapons of mass destruction. While Iraq has ceaselessly complained about delays in the sanctions Committee, it has submitted hundreds of 986 contracts that fail to meet the criteria and procedures that Iraq agreed to with the United Nations Secretariat and has routinely stooped to political favouritism in the 986 contracting process. And after the Council extended the 986 programme twice in 1997, the Iraqi Government twice delayed new oil sales under the resolution, needlessly slowing the delivery of humanitarian goods and forcing the Council to adopt resolution 1129 (1997) to avoid further deterioration of the humanitarian situation. Indeed, Iraq refused even to provide input to the Secretary-General's report, a report intended to provide to the Council recommendations on ways to improve the delivery and increase the supply of humanitarian goods to Iraq. On 5 February Iraq sent its official observations on the Secretary-General's report, in which it rejected many of his proposals and recommendations. Most notably, it rejected his call for an ongoing distribution plan and his practical expectation that Iraq would contribute local resources to infrastructure projects.

The use of one's own resources to help one's own people is a basic moral obligation that should form the cornerstone of a responsible Government's response to real humanitarian needs. Iraq's failure to provide

information for the Secretary-General's report and its failure to commit its own resources to support his humanitarian recommendations are telling reminders of the Iraqi Government's true attitude toward the plight of its people. That is why the United States stands ready to work closely with other members of this Council to ensure that this resolution works as intended — works not for the benefit of the Iraqi regime, but for the welfare of ordinary people in Iraq.

We must give the Secretary-General our strong support and clear guidance as he implements this massive programme, including a significant expansion of the United Nations observation and monitoring function in Iraq. We must make certain that food and medicine, and infrastructure improvements directly related to their distribution, remain the top priorities under this new resolution. Nothing is more important to the basic welfare of Iraqi citizens. We must make certain that the goods imported into Iraq under this resolution are carefully observed and monitored so that they cannot be diverted to military purposes or used for the personal benefit of the Iraqi leadership. We must make certain that the other commitments Iraq agreed to when it accepted resolution 986 (1995) — for example, paying a certain percentage of oil revenues to fund the United Nations Special Commission, the United Nations Compensation Commission, and other important functions — are honoured. We must make certain that the sanctions Committee acts quickly yet responsibly to approve contracts in a manner consistent with the intent of this and other relevant resolutions. And we must wait until we have more and better information before authorizing any oil infrastructure improvements under this resolution, and do so only after careful consideration on the basis of the Secretary-General's forthcoming report and of the humanitarian objectives of this resolution.

Let me remind everyone that resolution 986 (1995) was intended by the Security Council as a temporary measure to provide essential humanitarian assistance to the Iraqi people, not as a vehicle to refurbish Iraq's economy. That will be possible only when the sanctions authorized by the Council are lifted. And that, in turn, will happen when Iraq complies fully and unconditionally with all relevant resolutions of the Council.

It is sad that the Iraqi leaders have postponed that day for so long by consistently and flagrantly flouting their obligations under the resolutions, obligations that they themselves agreed to under the terms of the Gulf War ceasefire. Unfortunately, as long as the Government of Iraq persists in its mistaken belief that it can defy the will of the international community and that of the Council, the sanctions must remain in place, and the United Nations will continue to bear the burden that the Iraqi Government has refused: caring for the welfare of the people of Iraq.

Mr. Sallah (Gambia): The importance of the oil-for-food programme cannot be overemphasized, for the procurement and distribution of food, medicine and other humanitarian supplies to assist in the alleviation of the hardship being suffered by the vulnerable sectors of the Iraqi population is a great step in the right direction. This is an important element in the implementation of Security Council resolution 986 (1995).

My delegation welcomes the substantial increase effected in this direction, as outlined in the distribution plan submitted by the Secretary-General, which is the object of the draft resolution being considered. The fact that the distribution plan is not being affected in any way by the present circumstances is very gratifying to my delegation, for this shows the great concern the Security Council has for the well-being of the ordinary Iraqi citizens.

The implementation of this programme in its increased form, as recommended by the Secretary-General, will also assist in putting back into proper shape the deteriorating infrastructure, which is vital in ameliorating the agricultural and other sectors. Thus, my delegation feels that Iraq should not form any linkage between the enhanced programme and non-compliance with the implementation of resolution 687 (1991). We therefore urge Iraq to embrace this magnanimous gesture and cooperate fully with the implementation of the distribution plan under the oil-for-food programme.

My country, the Gambia, is not insensitive to the suffering of the vulnerable groups in Iraq affected by the imposition of sanctions. The grim statistics in the Secretary-General's report of 1 February 1998, document S/1998/90, speak for themselves. But the Iraqi authorities have an obligation to fulfil: full compliance with all the relevant Security Council resolutions, as well as cooperation with the Secretariat on the implementation of the expanded oil-for-food programme. The Iraqi authorities should not hold their suffering people as hostages.

In the interest of peace and tranquillity, we are further urging Iraq to afford the Secretary-General the

necessary cooperation so that a bright light can be seen at the end of the tunnel. The Iraqi authorities should not lose sight of the fact that the whole world is advocating a peaceful resolution of the present stand-off, and the opportunity now presents itself in the form of the variables being offered in this regard by the Security Council through the Secretary-General. We urge them to fulfil their part of the bargain.

With these remarks, we reiterate our profound wish for a very successful mission by the Secretary-General, whose untiring efforts for the peaceful resolution of the present impasse are highly commendable. In the light of the foregoing, my delegation will vote in favour of the draft resolution before us today.

Sir John Weston (United Kingdom): This draft resolution, in whose preparation, along with Portugal and Sweden, the United Kingdom has played a major part, would implement the recommendations of the Secretary-General to expand the oil-for-food programme in Iraq. But it is more than just a technical draft resolution. It is a clear message that we are not prepared to see the Iraqi people suffer as a consequence of the actions of their leaders, a message that we will do everything we can to see that their urgent humanitarian needs are met.

This draft resolution will mean a massive increase in the humanitarian programme in Iraq. It will pay for the food and medicines the Iraqi people so badly need. It will help restore clean water and proper sanitation to hundreds of thousands of Iraqis. It will restore schools and help farmers increase their output. And, as a new measure, it will provide funds for Iraqi pilgrims to perform the Hajj.

No one wishes to see sanctions maintained for one moment longer than necessary. We have always been determined that their impact on the Iraqi people be minimized and their impact on the Iraqi regime maximized. Despite Iraqi propaganda, we all know that food and medicine are not covered by United Nations sanctions, and thus it is not sanctions that have prevented food and medicine from getting to the Iraqi people. We have done our utmost to ensure that their needs are met. In 1991 we presented a resolution allowing Iraq to sell oil in return for humanitarian supplies. The Iraqi regime refused to implement it. We tried again later that year with another resolution. Again, the United Nations adopted it and Saddam Hussain rejected it.

In 1995 we all tried again, adopting the oil-for-food resolution 986 (1995). The Iraqi regime opposed the resolution for over a year. For months afterwards they prevented its implementation. When they did sell oil, they used the money to lower, by an equivalent amount, their own spending on the welfare of the Iraqi people. Meanwhile, Saddam Hussain has spent at least $1 billion on his presidential palaces.

We have said it many times before, but it needs to be repeated: all that the Government of Iraq has to do to bring about the lifting of sanctions is to comply with the resolutions of this Council. It is a simple enough demand, but one that the Government of Iraq persists in ignoring. Instead, the Iraqi regime has cynically manipulated the oil-for-food programme and slowed the delivery of supplies to the people who most need them. They have prolonged the suffering of the Iraqi people for their own political ends.

This draft resolution therefore rightly responds to the strong wish of every member of the Security Council to do everything possible to bring much-needed humanitarian relief to the Iraqi people, to increase the food ration and to restore medical facilities and agriculture. The Government of Iraq must accept this draft resolution so that the people of Iraq can get the help they so desperately need. If it does not, we know exactly who is to blame.

The President: (*interpretation from French*): I shall now make a statement in my capacity as representative of Gabon.

As we prepare to adopt the draft resolution that has been submitted for our consideration, I should like first of all to thank the sponsors for their efforts to produce the final text.

My delegation welcomes the consensus reached by the Council on the text of this draft resolution. In authorizing the export by Iraq of petroleum and petroleum products in sufficient quantities, the Council will help put an end to the suffering of the Iraqi people. Indeed, it is unacceptable that that people should continue to pay unjustly for the errors of its leaders. The serious humanitarian situation facing Iraq today would surely not have come about if in 1990 the leaders of that country had not taken the decision to attack a sovereign and peace-loving country, Kuwait. The justified sanctions that the Council had to adopt met the need to condemn firmly Iraqi aggression. I believe that the Council's appeal in paragraph 7 of the draft resolution deserves our full support. It appeals to all Member States to cooperate in

order to make it possible for urgently required humanitarian supplies to reach the Iraqi people as rapidly as possible.

We should furthermore welcome the fact that this draft resolution opens up the possibility of adjusting, if necessary, the amounts of petroleum and petroleum products exported for essential humanitarian needs.

My delegation hopes that the Iraqi authorities will take the full measure of the Security Council's desire to work for the improvement of the humanitarian situation in Iraq. It therefore encourages Iraq to cooperate fully in the implementation not only of the draft resolution before us, but also of all relevant Security Council resolutions to which Iraq is subject, for the sake of the well-being of its people.

I now resume my functions as President of the Council.

I shall now put to the vote the draft resolution contained in document S/1998/136.

A vote was taken by show of hands.

In favour:

Bahrain, Brazil, China, Costa Rica, France, Gabon, Gambia, Japan, Kenya, Portugal, Russian Federation, Slovenia, Sweden, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America.

The President (*interpretation from French*): There were 15 votes in favour. The draft resolution has been adopted unanimously as resolution 1153 (1998).

Before adjourning the meeting, with the Council's permission, I would like to express the hope that the Secretary-General's mission to Iraq will be crowned with success.

There are no further speakers on my list. The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on its agenda.

The Security Council will remain seized of the matter.

The meeting rose at 4.35 p.m.